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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY Egypt/USSR

SUBJECT Closing of Armenian Club in Alexandria
for Pro-Soviet Activities

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1. The Sevan Club of Alexandria, which was closed by order of the Egyptian Police during March 1949, was an organization for political action and for the dissemination of pro-Soviet propaganda among the Armenians in Alexandria, source states. Its ostensible purpose was the promotion of cultural and intellectual interests, but these interests were considered by the Tashnaks and the Egyptian public security authorities to be incidental to the political and propaganda objectives of the Club.
2. The small ~~Chahineh~~ ~~Chahineh~~ ~~Chahineh~~ consisted of an apartment of several rooms in a building on rue de l'Eglise Maronite in Alexandria. Membership in the Club was apparently on an informal basis, and its premises were used by repatriation advocates, Hinchaks, Communists, and numerous other pro-Soviet Armenians.
3. The most prominent figure in the Sevan Club was Kalinian (fnu),* a Communist and former member of the Armenian Repatriation Committee. According to source, Kalinian is vigorous, active, and fairly intelligent. In the latter part of May 1948, he received a warning from the Egyptian Government to cease his pro-Soviet activities, and has been very discreet in his public statements and actions since that time, source states. Kalinian, along with his brother (name not reported), was interned by the Egyptian Police in May 1948 on suspicion of being a Communist, but was later released.
4. Hamper Tavit (David) was another active and prominent member of the Club. Tavit is a member of the Armenian Repatriation Committee and is reported to be a Communist, source states. He is the proprietor of the Manchester House Tailor Shop on Boulevard Saad Zaghlul in Alexandria.
5. [REDACTED] the following persons were frequent visitors to the Sevan Club:
 - a. Selian (fnu), a repatriation advocate and a strongly anti-Tashnak propagandist.
 - b. Harabed der-Sarkissian, also a repatriation advocate and a strongly anti-Tashnak propagandist.

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c. Psak Toumayan (Toumayantz), Deputy Prelate of the Armenian Orthodox Church in Alexandria. According to source, the Egyptian Government issued an expulsion order for Toumayan sometime during March 1949, but, as of 29 March, he had not left.** It had been expected that he would go to Palestine, via Amman, but source stated that he was still in the Foreigners' Prison at Heliopolis. Rangavar Armenians and several "Neutrals" were interceding in his behalf with the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior in an effort to have the expulsion order rescinded, since they felt that Toumayan's deportation would be damaging to the reputation of the entire Armenian community. The Tashnaks were delighted to see the expulsion order, however, because they regard Toumayan as one of the leaders of the pro-Soviet Armenian group and as especially dangerous, in view of his ecclesiastical position, source asserts.

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* Comment. Probably either Hratch or Nuber Kalinian.

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** Comment. According to the Review of the Arabic Press, issued by the American Embassy in Cairo and dated 25 March 1949, al-Zaman stated that the reason for Toumayan's deportation was "subversive activities."

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